



WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy and Procedure #4.101

Inmate Classification

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Authority: Wyoming Statute(s): 25-1-104; 25-1-105 ACA Standard(s): 4-4295-Revised; 4-4296; 4-4298; 4-4299; 4-4300; 4-4301; 4-4302; 4-4303.	Effective Date: March 15, 2012 Revision/Review History: 05/17/10 Summary of Revision/Review: Updates existing policy pursuant to annual review.
Cross Reference of Policy: P&P #3.100, <i>Inmate Communication and Grievance Procedure</i> ; P&P #4.102, <i>Case Management</i>	Supersedes Existing Policy:
Approved: R.O. Lampert Robert O. Lampert, Director	
2-17-12 Date	

APPROVED FOR INMATE DISTRIBUTION

REFERENCE

1. ATTACHMENTS – None Noted
2. OTHER
 - A. *WDOC Female Classification Handbook*
 - B. *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*
 - C. *WDOC Internal Classification Handbook*



I. PURPOSE

- A. **Guidelines for Inmate Classification.** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for carrying out inmate classification in Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) correctional facilities. This policy, in conjunction with the classification handbooks referenced by this policy, shall serve as the written inmate classification plan, which specifies the objectives of the classification system and methods for achieving them, and provides a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to determine whether the objectives are being met. (ACA 4-4295-Revised)

II. POLICY

- A. **Initial Classification.** It is the policy of the WDOC to provide an inmate classification system that will:
1. Establish an inmate's recommended classification rating for the first six (6) months of his/her incarceration in WDOC correctional facilities.
 2. Help to identify the type and level of risk likely to be presented by the inmate;
 3. Provide individual and aggregate data about inmates, information about WDOC security, housing and program needs, and information helpful in projecting population needs. This information will be included in regular reports by correctional facilities to the Central Office and shall be used to ensure the efficient management of the inmate population.
- B. **Reclassification of Inmates.** It is the policy of the WDOC to provide a reclassification instrument for the purpose of updating and reviewing an inmate's previous custody assessment.
1. A reassessment does not necessarily change the custody level or housing assignment. It primarily functions to monitor the inmate's adjustment and to bring attention to problems that may have arisen.
 2. Custody reassessment is similar to the initial custody assessment, but places greater emphasis on institutional conduct to reflect the inmate's actual behavior while confined. It is important that inmates with long sentences have the opportunity to progress to a less restrictive custody level based on compliance with correctional facility requirements.

III. DEFINITIONS



- A. **Classification:** A means of identifying and categorizing various inmate traits, characteristics and potential risks in order to house inmates in a safe, humane manner. Proper classification also assures secure facility operations and facilitates staff and public safety.
- B. **WDOC Female Classification Handbook:** The manual used to provide instruction for staff in the process of inmate classification and reclassification specific for female inmates. This manual includes a female-specific Initial Classification Instrument and a female-specific Reclassification Instrument.
- C. **WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook:** The manual used to provide instruction for staff in the process of inmate classification and reclassification. This manual includes the Initial Classification Instrument and the Reclassification Instrument.
- D. **WDOC Internal Classification Handbook:** The manual used to provide instruction and guidelines for staff in the process of determining an inmate's appropriate housing level based on his/her level of aggression. This manual may also be used to assess potential risk of harm for Prison Rape Elimination Act compliance. It is intended to be used as a supplement to this policy.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. **Classification System.** This policy, together with the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*, the *WDOC Female Classification Handbook*, and the *WDOC Internal Classification Handbook* establish the inmate classification system for WDOC. The objectives of this system are to provide for the impartial assessment of risk, categorization, and efficient management of every inmate in the system.
 - 1. The classification system includes the following custody levels: Minimum, Minimum Restricted; Medium, Close General Population, Close Restricted, and Maximum. These levels are determined by scoring of the appropriate classification assessment instrument. All inmates should be assigned to the least restrictive custody level necessary. Each classification shall be reviewed regularly and shall be updated as needed. (ACA 4-4296)
 - 2. Unless precluded for security or other substantial reasons, all inmates shall be given forty-eight (48) hours prior notice of their custody assessment; such notice may be waived by the inmate. (ACA 4-4302)



- i. Inmates should have sufficient time and assistance, if requested, to prepare for their custody assessment.
- ii. Forty-eight (48) hour notice is not required for reassessments that occur as the result of disciplinary infractions or new information as indicated in the *WDOC Female Classification Handbook* or *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*.

B. Initial Classification of Inmates

1. At initial classification, each inmate shall be assigned a staff member to ensure supervision and personal contact; a unit management team may perform this function. (ACA 4-4299)
2. The initial classification of inmates, including new inmates, probation violators, parole violators, and inmates transferred from other states, shall be conducted and recorded at the correctional facility by a designated person (*i.e.*, case manager) upon the assessment phase of the inmate at the correctional facility. As part of this process, the institution shall solicit and use pre-institutional assessment information regarding the inmate's progress and adjustment during prior contacts with the criminal justice system. (ACA 4-4298)
3. Initial classification shall take place within thirty (30) days of the inmate's commitment to the custody of the WDOC, and must be completed before an inmate is moved from the admission and orientation housing area.
4. The inmate's custody level shall be determined by scoring the classification assessment instrument, which can be found in the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook* for males or the *WDOC Female Classification Handbook* for females.
 - i. Inmates previously housed at the Wyoming Boot Camp program who have been released to probation and who return to a WDOC correctional facility for a violation of terms of probation will be assessed using the reclassification tool.
 - ii. Parolees who return to a WDOC correctional facility for a violation of terms of parole will be assessed using the reclassification tool.

E. Reassessment and Reclassification.

1. Reassessment and Reclassification shall be completed and recorded at the institutional level by an institutional case manager.



2. Each inmate's classification status shall be reviewed at least every twelve (12) months. (ACA 4-4300) Instructions for determining the timing of classification reassessment can be found in the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*. Factors include:
 - i. Initial custody level and amount of time the inmate has to serve;
 - ii. Post-disciplinary infractions;
 - iii. Receipt of new information.
3. The case manager will complete the classification reassessment instrument and maintain the inmate's custody level according to the inmate's score. The assessment instrument and directions for reclassification can be found in the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*.

H. Classification and Housing

1. Rules and procedures regarding inmate housing at the Wyoming Medium Correctional Institution (WMCI) and the Wyoming State Penitentiary (WSP) can be found in the *WDOC Internal Classification Handbook*.
2. Housing assignments at WDOC facilities other than the WSP will be based on the inmate's classification rating determined by the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook* and other institutional housing procedures.
 - i. An inmate is not *entitled* to minimum security housing because he/she is classified as a minimum custody inmate.
3. Inmates will be classified to the most appropriate level of custody and programming both on admission and upon review of their status. Classification shall be at the lowest level consistent with correctional facility good order.

I. Classification Overrides. Rules and procedures for overriding an inmate's classification custody level can be found in the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*, the *WDOC Female Classification Handbook*, and the *WDOC Internal Classification Handbook*.

J. Data Collection. Classification status shall be recorded for each inmate and into a format which will allow collective information to be processed, as needed or via regular report.



1. Classification data will include the initial classification custody score and level and the latest reclassification score and level.
 2. Information regarding the inmate's classification will be entered into WCIS.
- K. Classification Reporting.** Regular reports of inmate classification level and housing status, including approved overrides at initial classification and subsequent reclassification, shall be provided by each WDOC correctional facility to the Central Office as directed by the Prison Division Administrator.
- L. Requested Institution Level Review.** (ACA 4-4301)
1. Classification proceedings and decisions, including custody designation and facility and cell assignment and housing decisions, are not subject to appeal under the *Inmate Communication and Grievance Procedure* (WDOC Policy and Procedure #3.100).
 2. Inmates may request an institutional level review of initial classification and reclassification proceedings and decisions, to include level of custody, housing and other program status changes, except those directly resulting from formal disciplinary action, by addressing an inmate communication to the deciding institution's inmate housing manager within five (5) calendar days of the decision.
 - i. Inmate initiated reviews of classification progress and status shall be as indicated above. Review of progress and program status for case management shall be as described in WDOC Policy and Procedure #4.102, *Case Management*. Any other conditions under which an inmate can initiate a review of progress and program status shall be specified in local Operational Procedures. (ACA 4-4303)
 3. The communication must include a complete description of the incident, action, or application of the policy being appealed, the basis for the request for review and the resolution requested.
 4. The standard for review shall be limited to whether there was substantial compliance with institutional standards and procedures in handling the inmate classification review and whether the resulting classification decision is in compliance with the classification plan.
 5. The institution housing manager may, but is not required to, initiate a multi-disciplinary team review of the classification proceeding and decision(s) being appealed in order to arrive at a decision.



6. The institution housing manager shall respond to the request for institutional level review in writing within ten (10) working days of receipt of the request for review.
 - i. The institutional response shall include at least a brief restatement of the issue raised, the decision made by the institutional housing manager, and the reason for the decision.
 - ii. Decisions made by the institution housing manager concerning institution specific cell assignment and housing decisions shall be considered final for the purposes of this classification review process.

M. Requested Central Office Review.

1. If the inmate is not satisfied with the response of the institution housing manager to a requested institution level review on a matter related to institutional assignment, custody designation, or program status change, he/she may request a second level review of the decision in writing to:

WDOC Housing and Classification Manager
Wyoming Department of Corrections
1934 Wyott Drive, Suite 100
Cheyenne, Wyoming, 82002.

2. The request for a second level review must include a complete description of the incident, action, or application of the policy being appealed, the basis for the request for review and the resolution requested, along with a copy of the previous request for institutional level review and the response thereto. These copies will not be returned to the inmate.
3. The request for a second level review must be received by the WDOC Housing and Classification Manager within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the response provided to the inmate by the institution housing manager in order to be considered.
4. The WDOC Housing and Classification Manager may seek additional information from the classifying institution, or may decide the issue based upon the information provided by the inmate and/or available through WDOC inmate records systems.
5. The standard for review shall be limited to whether there was substantial compliance with agency standards and procedures in handling the inmate classification review and whether the resulting classification decision is in compliance with the classification plan.



6. The WDOC Housing and Classification Manager shall respond to the inmate in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the request. The response shall include a brief restatement of the issue raised, the decision made by the Housing and Classification Manager, the reason for the decision, and a statement that the decision is final.

V. TRAINING POINTS

- A. TRUE OR FALSE? Inmate classification is done primarily for administrative purposes and has little bearing on institutional safety.
- B. How soon must an inmate be classified upon intake to the state penitentiary?
- C. What are the general factors used to determine when to reassess an inmate's classification status?
- D. What is the purpose of the *WDOC Institutional Classification Handbook*?
- E. What is the purpose of the *WDOC Internal Classification Handbook*?
- F. May an inmate request a review of classification proceedings and decisions, and if so, how may he/she do so?